



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, July 21, 2026

5:30 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 5:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR HAROLD COPENHAVER AT 5:30 P.M.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

3. ROLL CALL (ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE) INITIATED AND CONFIRMED BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Present 11 - Brian Emison; Chris Moore; Chris Gibson; David McClain; Joe Hafner; Kevin Miller; Anthony Coleman; Janice Porter; John Street; Charles Coleman and L.J. Bryant

Absent 1 - Ann Williams

4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Harold Copenhaver said, so next Council, we move on to item number four. We do have just a few short presentations that are not listed but they won't take long. Chief Hamrick, if you would like to come forward, I think you've got the first presentation that you would like to make this evening. And then Council, I'm going to roll on into that with Little Banks Mathis is going to come forward, he and his family. Chief, the floor is yours.

Fire Chief Marty Hamrick said, so Council, I want to highlight a few of our other city employees that probably don't get spotlight very often. Most of the time we deal with emergencies in the city, it's either Fire Department, Police Department that usually handles that. We had an incident on July 8th, earlier this month, where we had a car wreck that was in front of Discovery Island on Mathews. You know that ditch that sits to the north side, it's pretty deep, probably about 15 to 20 feet deep. We had a few of our parks employees who were out there mowing, happened to witness a car run off the road into that ditch. They scaled the ditch, helped the occupants out, and a dog got them up to safety, sit with them until the fire trucks and ambulances got there and dealt with appropriately. So we had the crew that was on the scene put these guys in for an award for the Fire Department we thought we'd present it here, and just highlight their activities that day and express our gratitude for the things our city does. So those three individuals are Antoine Blair, Antonio Blair, and Jaden Gaston. Y'all come up front, please. I don't know if Jim or anybody else with the parks wants to come up as well. We're going to give you guys an award of commendation for helping us out. We appreciate what y'all did, it's stuff you don't have to do that makes a difference. So, thank you very much for helping those people.

Mayor Copenhaver said, well you know now Council, it is time to also bring up another superhero. This young man, his name is Banks Mathis. I just want to give you a little update on who Banks is and what he is all about. He was diagnosed with acute flaccid myelitis, which is an extremely rare condition. He was one of only four children in the country diagnosed, the only case in Arkansas. And at this point, he's only the fourth child in the country diagnosed with the only case in this area. As I said earlier, he's been to Le Bonheur. He's received treatment at Shriners Hospital in Philadelphia, and he's done an amazing job. It affects the spinal cord, and Banks is a strong young man. And so I want to make you a strong citizen for our community. And it's proclamation for acute flaccid myelitis awareness month in July. So I couldn't think of a better person to honor. We're raising awareness through you by promoting education among families, educators, health care professionals, and community members are essential providing recognition of AFM and supporting affected individuals and their families. It is fitting to acknowledge the strength and resilience of AFM patients like yourself and their families, while also recognizing the ongoing efforts of researchers, health care providers, and advocates dedicated to advancing understanding, treatment, and support of those who have this rare condition. The City of Jonesboro recognizes local AFM warrior Banks Mathis. Extremely, his extraordinarily courage, his resilience, unwavering determination has transformed personal challenges into a powerful source of hope, inspiration, and advocacy, inspiring others and bringing greater awareness to AFM throughout the community and beyond. So I, therefore, Mayor Harold Copenhaver, the Mayor of the City of Jonesboro, Arkansas, do hereby proclaim the month of July 2026 as AFM Awareness Month in the City of Jonesboro and urge all residents to raise awareness of AFM and join together in advancing understanding and research and hope for a brighter future as what you and your family and Banks you're doing for our community. So I'm here to honor you and you need to go forward and serve that. Okay, congratulations young man. Kind of sets you back a moment, doesn't it?

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, to Approve the Consent Agenda. The motioned PASSED

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and LJ Bryant

Absent: 1 - Ann Williams

[MIN-26:060](#)

MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON JULY 7, 2026

Attachments: [CC Minutes 07072026.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

[RES-26:073](#)

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, TO PLACE A MUNICIPAL LIEN ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2612 CRAWFORD, PARCEL 01-144273-02300, OWNED BY RANDY/ALEY CRAWFORD IN THE AMOUNT OF \$275

Attachments: [2612 CRAWFORD COUNCIL NOTICE 261474.pdf](#)
[261474 VIOLATION LETTER 2612 CRAWFORD.pdf](#)
[262805 BILLING REQ 2612 CRAWFORD.docx](#)
[262805 INVOICE 2612 CRAWFORD.pdf](#)

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-090-2026

[RES-26:076](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO SUBMIT A NOTICE OF INTENT FOR THE FEMA FLOOD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (FMA) GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE NORTH MAIN STREET DETENTION POND PROJECT AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

THIS ITEM WAS PASSED ON THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Enactment No: R-EN-091-2026

RESOLUTIONS NOT ON THE CONSENT AGENDA

[RES-26:075](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ENTER INTO A FACILITY USAGE AGREEMENT WITH JONESBORO JETS, INC.

Attachments: [JETS Swim contract resolution .docx](#)
[JETS 2026 Swim Contract Signed.pdf](#)

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, Mayor, just real quickly, I'm going to recuse from the next two I have been pulled. I do have a daughter that swims, but during the comment, I'm going to ask questions about the legality of that. So, I'll recuse.

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 10 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and LJ Bryant

Absent: 1 - Ann Williams

Recused: 1 - Chris Gibson

Enactment No: R-EN-092-2026

[RES-26:077](#)

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS TO ENTER INTO A FACILITY USAGE AGREEMENT WITH SHARK WAVE AQUATICS TEAM FOR YEAR 2026

Attachments: [SWAT 2026 Agreement final\(BC.signed\).pdf](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 10 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and LJ Bryant

Absent: 1 - Ann Williams

Recused: 1 - Chris Gibson

Enactment No: R-EN-093-2026

[RES-26:078](#)

A RESOLUTION TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE ABANDONMENT OF A 15' ALLEY LOCATED BETWEEN 1810 HENRY STREET AND 1812 HENRY STREET LOCATED ON PLAT OF DAVID CLIFFT AS REQUESTED BY DAVID CLIFFT.

Attachments: [Opinion Letter](#)
 [Abandonment Plat](#)
 [AT&T](#)
 [CWL](#)
 [Optimum](#)
 [Ritter](#)
 [Summit](#)
 [Publication Receipt](#)

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Moore, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this matter be Passed. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and LJ Bryant

Absent: 1 - Ann Williams

Enactment No: R-EN-094-2026

6. NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON FIRST READING

[ORD-26:020](#)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING APPENDIX 7 OF THE STORMWATER DRAINAGE DESIGN MANUAL

Attachments: [ARR150000 Permit 2026.pdf](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Brian Emison, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:020 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

[ORD-26:022](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, ARTICLE III, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR A CHANGE IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM C-3 GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO RM-12 LUO MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT WITH LIMITED USE OVERLAY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2038 NORTH CHURCH STREET, JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, AS REQUESTED BY NK & SONS INVESTMENT

Attachments: [rezoning application signed](#)
[2038 N Church Rezoning Plat](#)
[Kumar Rezoning-Certified Mail Receipts](#)
[Staff Summary RZ_26_09](#)
[rezoning information](#)
[MAPC Minutes 06.23.26](#)
[Publication Receipt](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Brian Emison, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:022 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

[ORD-26:025](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 TO C-3 LUO FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1400 SOUTHERN RIDGE BLVD. AS REQUESTED BY FISHER ARNOLD

Attachments: [Cover Letter - Rezoning](#)
[Rezone Application signed](#)
[Plat](#)
[FA Rezoning Property Owner Notification Letter](#)
[COJ Rezoning Notification](#)
[certified mail receipt](#)
[Staff Summary RZ_26](#)
[MAPC Minutes 07.14.26](#)
[Publication Receipt](#)

Councilmember John Street motioned, seconded by Councilmember Chris Gibson, to suspend the rules and offer ORD-26:025 by title only. All voted aye.

Held at one reading

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ORDINANCES ON SECOND READING

[ORD-26:017](#)

AN ORDINANCE MODIFYING ORDINANCE 24:037 WHICH ESTABLISHED AND CONSOLIDATED SPECIAL TRAFFIC PATTERNS NEAR JONESBORO PUBLIC SCHOOL CAMPUSES

Held at second reading

[ORD-26:019](#)

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF JONESBORO TO PLACE VARIOUS TRAFFIC SIGNS AT DESIGNATED LOCATIONS AS DETERMINED BY THE TRAFFIC CONTROL COMMITTEE

Held at second reading

[ORD-26:021](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, ARTICLE III, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF JONESBORO, ARKANSAS, PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-3 TO C-3 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED

AT 2911 BROWNS LANE

Attachments: [26139 -ORD-RZ.doc](#)
 [Browns Lane Rezoning.pdf](#)
 [26139 Hasley Brown39s Lane Rezone Packet.pdf](#)
 [Staff Summary RZ_26.pdf](#)
 [26139 - Halsey Brown's Lane Mail Receipts.pdf](#)
 [associated.pdf](#)

Waived Second Reading

ORDINANCES ON THIRD READING

[ORD-26:018](#)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 117, KNOWN AS THE ZONING ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN ZONING BOUNDARIES FROM R-1 TO PD PLANNED DEVELOPMENT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1004 N. CARAWAY ROAD AS REQUESTED BY DAVID TAPP

Attachments: [Staff Summary RZ_26-08](#)
 [Rezoning-Application 1004 N Caraway](#)
 [Plat](#)
 [Certified Letter Receipts](#)
 [MAPC Approved Rezoning 6.9.26 Minutes](#)
 [1004 n caraway receipt](#)

PROPONENT ASKED THAT THIS ITEM BE TEMPORARILY POSTPONED UNTIL AUGUST 4, 2026.

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, I make a motion to table temporary until August 4th. There have been some new business developments come on this, and they have asked for a little bit more time, seconded by Councilmember Chris Moore. Mayor Copenhagen said, I do have a motion on the floor to table until August 4th. Is that correct, Chris? Councilmember Gibson said, that's correct.

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Chris Moore, that this matter be Postponed Temporarily . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and LJ Bryant

Absent: 1 - Ann Williams

8. MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Harold Copenhagen reported on the following:

First, I want to start with an update on some important infrastructure projects. Our multi-million dollar street maintenance and overlay program is well underway, and as of today, crews have overlaid portions, or all of, y'all ready? Barbara Ann, South Culberhouse, Huntington, West Jefferson, Leslie Ann, South Madison, Marzi Ann, South McClure, West Monroe, Nesbitt, Olive, Tony Ann, Union, Walnut, Warner, West Washington. Overlays will soon begin on Walnut, Vine, Floyd, Burr, Twin Oaks Street,

Andrews Cove, Timberlake Cove, West College Avenue. So these are quite a few streets, and I'll follow and keep you updated as we move on to additional streets as they come about.

The Arkansas Highway Department is also actively investing in Jonesboro. The Dr. Martin Luther King Eastern Bypass is approximately 72% finished with an updated completion date in late winter, early spring of 2027. The Highway 351 Airport overpass is approximately 88% complete. Highway 351 North and South intersection improvements are approximately 57% complete. Those improvements are estimated to be finished in the fall of 2027. So the next step will be widening 351 from Pleasant View to Peachtree. That is currently expected to start in 2027. The Southwest Drive and Parker Road intersection improvements are almost 25% complete. The Harrisburg and Parker Road improvements and widening project has just started and is approximately 2% complete. The new Highway 351 Connector Road that the city partnered with Arkansas State University and the State of Arkansas is currently on the planning stage. Those planning stages are about 60% complete.

Groundwork is underway on our new 911 Center. The pedestrian street improvements project on Johnson Avenue are underway. And last week we had an open bid on the South Caraway Road improvement project. That bid came in on target with internal construction cost estimates. All items are funded by our revenue bond. These projects represent more than total \$125 million in infrastructure improvements happening right now in Jonesboro. All projects we will see come online within the next three years or so. That's incredible. So I want to thank you, Council, for helping make these projects happen.

And now a few items that don't involve pavement or concrete. I want to congratulate Council members Janice Porter and Kevin Miller at the recent AML Summer Convention they were honored for completing. Their Level 1 and Level 2 Civilpedia certification respectively. I appreciate their dedication to taking every opportunity to be available and expand their civic knowledge to continue providing incredible constituent services.

The Street Department and Breaking Bonds are focusing on cleaning up litter for our drainage ways and road sides despite the heat. This includes current hand cleaning, picking up at Turtle Creek, hats off to the hard work they do each day, and a big thumbs down to those who feel that they need to throw trash out the window. Quite frankly, I'm tired of it. We work too hard in this community to be proud of it, and I'm tired and tired of people dumping litter in the city that we live in. If you see these individuals, report these individuals. I'm fed up with it. We plan to do enhanced patrols along roadways, and we have repeat issues, and we're going to write tickets to anyone who makes the choice to litter in our streets.

I do want to offer a pat on the back to one of the neighbors, the city of Paragould, for recently being designated as one of the fastest percentage growth cities in the state. Listen, we need to continue to work together in this region to promote northeast Arkansas, and I look forward to seeing all our regions, including Jonesboro, grow. Not only does it open the door for more federal funding, but it creates more economic opportunities for our local businesses.

Keep Jonesboro Beautiful is finalizing plans for a planned Jonesboro public input meeting on Thursday, August 6th. Please show up. It's at Lost Pizza, and keep an eye out for those final details in the last couple of days.

Work has also been completed on upgrades to our tornado siren system so it won't go off on its own. While it wasn't without a hiccup, the end result is now an improved system with better connections, coverage, and dependable activation. And no, the tone of the sirens has not changed.

It's hot outside and will continue to be hot outside for a while, so please keep your pets in mind during this time. Make sure they have more water but not as much peanut butter. If your dog is like mine, they stay out in the heat too long. And please check on the elderly, neighbors, and relatives to ensure they're okay.

Last and most importantly, the annual Stuff the Bus event will be August 1st this year, next Saturday at Area Walmart stores. Thank you to the United Way for heading up this important and heartfelt program, and I encourage each of us to donate and help select children in the need before school starts back.

Also, Council, your monthly reports are now on the table that we promised last week, so please pick those up, and that will give you updates of every department that we have in the city.

9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Mayor, I've got to say, as someone who lives downtown, having all the roads repaved after City Water and Light went through and made the sewer repairs, it's pretty nice. It's been pretty rough down there for the last year and a half, so I appreciate getting on it and getting that all done. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you.

Councilmember Chris Gibson said, yeah, as I said earlier, I've got some questions, and I really just need clarity. I'm not trying to belabor this or make a big deal out of it, but I do need some clarity. Recently, I've been accused of being non-transparent, and there have been some individuals within this community that have questioned my ethics in regard to my daughter being on a swim team and me being involved in the contract. Full transparency, my name is Chris Gibson. I'm a city councilman. I'm the chair of the Public Services Committee, and I do have a daughter that swims on a local swim team. I was involved very little in some contract word verbiage here recently in regard to the two swim teams here locally and lane usage, and it was directed completely toward public safety. My question is, do I need to recuse myself of everything that any of my family is involved in? I have abstained from being involved in their board because of conflict of interest. My daughter walks on sidewalks. My daughter plays in parks. My daughter soon will be driving on our city streets. If I need to recuse of everything, then I need to step down as the Chair of Public Services, so I need some clarity. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you, councilman, for your comments. City Attorney Carol Duncan replied, I think that as a general rule, what the rule is is it's considered a conflict of interest if you or a family member could in some way benefit financially from the vote. So I personally would not interpret being on a swim team. I mean, I do see it similarly as playing in a park or that we vote on improving parks equipment or things like that. Being on a swim team, I don't see how you probably—it's a financial detriment based upon my experience with these sports, but I don't think that you would benefit financially from that, and therefore I would not see it as a conflict. I think the general rule is does a council member, does the Mayor, do myself or April benefit financially from this, and if so, we disclose that and, you know, refrain from participating in any discussions or conflicts that could arise from that. But, I don't see that as what I would interpret as a conflict, just off the top of my head. Councilmember Gibson said, thank you. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you,

Carol.

Councilmember David McClain said, one thing, just I was having this conversation, and I think it touches to trying to help keep our community clean. We talked about a few years back looking at going from yard debris having to be put in paper bags. I feel like that's something we need to get done and go ahead and get over the finish line. There are some other cities, Conway, Fayetteville, Little Rock, Bentonville, they have that requirement, and I think it's something we should go ahead and switch to. So I don't know what the old ordinance or where it's at, but I think we should bring that back and maybe bring that back to Public Safety. Mayor Copenhaver said, we will look into that. (In the background, you can hear Chief Operating Officer Tony Thomas respond, it's on the way.) Councilmember McClain said, it's on the way, all right, thank you. City Attorney Carol Duncan replied, if I recall the hold up, it was making sure we had enough for our citizens before we implemented it, but that was when it was early and they weren't just everywhere. Councilmember McClain said, I can buy them at Lowes, Home Depot. Mr. Thomas said, there are a number of considerations I think that our Sanitation Department has given to that. We have gotten over the hump of availability of bags. You know, we have handed out bags. We still have bags that are available for the public to utilize. We were trying to make sure that we could get on a schedule, that we can pick up paper bags quicker than we were with the plastic bags because of the deterioration factor with the paper bags. And then lastly, we were trying to educate and ensure that the public was well aware of the change until the last item that the Sanitation Department and I have spoken about with the Mayor is a date. So the ordinance is prepared. We're just trying to get a date in there so that we have adequate time for the public to make that adjustment to paper without the outcry that we anticipate will come from some in our community. But the labor-intensive mechanism that we have with plastic and the inability to burn plastic, whether that's in an open pit, whether that's in an incinerator, we cannot burn plastic according to current state laws. And so that ordinance has been drafted. It's just a matter of finalizing a date and getting that through a process. Councilmember McClain said, thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you.

Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman said, yes, thank you. You can charge it to my ignorance for not being here for maybe the last meeting or two for personal reasons, but I saw the e-mail today regarding the Shelter building, and I did respond with a question. And, I just want to make certain Mayor and others understand my thoughts. You know the last time we talked about the JPD needing a building, it was two particular buildings and they were being leased and then now you're saying the Shelter building and purchasing it for I think right at \$3 million and so my concern is we're spending a lot, spending, spending, spending. And what's the plan really because I do think and I am a believer that our JPD needs a house, they need a full house, they do. We keep talking about it but I don't hear a plan about it and so I think we need to address that along with asking us to consider purchasing another building so I just need to wrap my head around that whole thing. And, we're not going to talk about it today, I just want to make certain that it's shared and that we can have discussions about it openly. Thank you. Mayor Copenhaver responded, well that's the whole intent of course your council being aware that I'm asking questions from council, what are your concerns, what are your questions and of course I don't think any of us at this table ever expected that we'd have a facility that would be inoperable. So you have to adjust off your plan accordingly every now and then and so these are things that we're going to have to make adjustments in the community and that's what the FAQ will do and I appreciate your comments so we'll answer those questions as best we can. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman responded, so let me say this because you said plan and that's the thing that I've been saying I haven't heard the actual plan and I'm

talking about the plan for the JPD having a facility that will house them. Mayor Copenhaver said, that's what we'll bring through with the FAQ. Councilmember Dr. Anthony Coleman responded, all right, thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you.

Councilmember L.J. Bryant said, question, Mayor. I was reading about Fort Smith having a problem with I guess folks were bussing homeless people into Fort Smith and they're having to take action. Have we seen any problems like that here? Mayor Copenhaver responded, not that I'm aware of. Matter of fact I think we've seen kind of a downturn a little bit. I haven't, I drive a lot and I haven't seen as much. Chief, you got anything to add to that? No. Okay. Police Chief Rick Elliott said, from time to time there's always transit people in and out. As far as a huge influx of different faces that we normally see on the street corners, not really a whole lot of difference. So nothing's really standing out. We can certainly check with shelters that provide needs to these individuals and see very similar faces in town, but like the Hope Foundation over on Fisher Street, but to my knowledge we've not seen that. And since the borders have shut down, we've seen a decrease in illegal immigrants coming into our area also. That was in fact a bigger problem than just the homeless issue. And a lot of people being bussed up to this part of the state and dumped by the busloads in nearby counties. Councilmember Bryant replied, and Fort Smith may have more of an issue being on the border of Oklahoma. Who knows. Let's keep our eye on Fort Smith and keep our eye here. So thank you, Mayor, thank you Chief. Mayor Copenhaver said, you bet. I'll contact the Mayor there. I know him well, so I'll contact him and get a follow-up with you.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Melissa Baldwin, 927 West Matthews, said, and I would like to start with a positive note. Thank you to Ms. Duncan, Mr. Richardson, and Chief Elliott for meeting with Ms. Slicer and I to talk about an issue that we have. And not only the two of us, but I have talked to some other people that have the same issue. Being on 927 West Matthews, I invite, keeping it on a positive note, thank you for the roads. They're great. And thank you for the sidewalks. You will never hear a West Ender gripe about the sidewalks. We've got bikers, we've got trikers, we've got dog walkers, we've got, I don't want to say people walkers, but I mean people that walk, runners, it's fantastic. That being said, and I do feel like I come from the best neighborhood in Jonesboro. One of the oldest and one of the best, and making baby steps getting better and better and better. But there is a bit of a blunt. And I don't blame the city. This is about Airbnbs, and I blame the host. It's not the city, it's the host. And as we all know, you've got good hosts and you've got bad hostess' and everything. And so, after speaking with you kind people, I started researching more. Arkansas has no statewide licensing system or unified rulebook for Airbnbs or short-term rentals. Instead, state law prevents outright bans, which is fine, but leaves specific regulations, codes, and permitting up to individual cities and counties. I love Airbnbs. I stay in Airbnbs. I like them. Not against them. Not against them in Jonesboro. Like I said, you've got to be good, though. And that led me to some questions. And I gave you all these, and like I said, please disregard the misspelled words and the typos. It was one in the morning. I was tired. Are the, and a lot of this falls on Derrel, Planning & Zoning. It seems like they kept mentioning planning and zoning and everything I looked up. And are the hosts or the Airbnb services aware of our codes and regulations, or do we have codes and regulations, specific ones? Is there a list of them? If so, can I at some time get a list of what they are? Okay, that's my first one. The emergency phone number. Well, that's great. I mean, it is, but the police can't be everywhere all the time, and they don't know there's an emergency there until a neighbor calls and says, hey, we've got an emergency going on in this neighborhood. And we were talking to one of our council

people, and I was fussing, and another neighbor was concerned about it. We didn't call the emergency hotline, because I wasn't dying at that point. And I set on the line for 20-25 minutes. And as I did, the party got bigger and bigger and more out of control and more out of control. I have been told advised since then, to call the emergency number, because it does get out of control. Three, how many, and this was touched upon at the last meeting, how many legitimate complaints are allowed for these bed and breakfast to lose their license or Airbnbs? Is there a set number? Because I know Chief Elliot over there. I know he must have gotten 200 calls one day at least, and it was legitimate complaints, very legitimate complaints. It should not have been going on in our neighborhood. So is there any way that they can be...? I know some of the bigger cities have huge fines, huge fines. But at some point, if they just keep doing this over and over again, they've got to lose their license. And they just can't continue doing that. I feel like the host has a responsibility to the neighbors to thoroughly vent his renters. You don't let a rapper rent your house, put it on Facebook that we're doing a video. I'm from Blytheville, but you've been back here. He's not very savory. I'm doing a video, and I'm renting a house, and if you want to be in my video, come on down. That's not acceptable. There is a business next door to that house. That parking lot is packed. I would guess. Of course, my husband's back here. He said, you're exaggerating. I would say probably 50-60 cars. Am I exaggerating? I am. How many cars? Mr. Baldwin said, 100 cars. I'm not exaggerating that. I mean, it was packed. So, I just would like to know, like I said, if there's a list, and possibly to meet with you all again and see what we can do. Because it's not just my neighborhood. It's not just Ms. Slicer's neighborhood. There was another little lady sitting over here, and she had to leave. It was her neighborhood. And it's not all Airbnbs. And it's not all neighborhoods. But it's a problem we have. And I don't, you know... Mayor Copenhagen interrupted and said, Ms. Baldwin, yeah, your time is up, and I know. Ms. Baldwin continued, it's not either. I was talking fast. Everybody knows I talk fast. Mayor Copenhagen continued, well, no, and what I want to say is, too, I know that the earlier meeting where you were here, I noticed that several of the residents were here earlier, and I know the meeting before, it was kind of alluded to. And, Carol, do you want to add something there to finish up? City Attorney Carol Duncan said, yeah, we don't normally, but I know a lot of you have the same question. So I want to point you, in our code, if you start at section 42-146 and go down from there, it talks about short-term rentals, what they're required in order to get their privilege license, what they have to post their permit, and then 42-150 talks about the revocation of that privilege license. And it says that because we require them to have a designated local agent or local contact person. We talked about that a little bit earlier. But if they're unresponsive or unable to be contacted and the owner doesn't remedy the issue, that's a grounds for revocation of their privilege license. If the property is deemed a nuisance by the Mayor or his or her designee, factors which may be considered in deeming the property a nuisance include but are not limited to criminal activity on the premises, repeated complaints of loud noise on the premises, trash or debris on the premises, parking of cars in areas not designated for parking, so that might not, the parking lot across the street might not count, such as in a yard or grass or in such a way as to impede traffic on the street, and then failure to post their current privilege license permit on all online or other rental advertising. And, of course, they have a right to appeal that if we revoke their privilege license. Those are the general guidelines. So there's not like a set, you know, 15 noise complaints. It's just repeated complaints of loud noise. So more than one incident. Ms. Baldwin said, apparently, so what I got for an area this size, Jonesboro, Arkansas, and it gave, I put the recommendations on the back, but apparently those are what you've got. Ms. Duncan said, so some of them are very similar to what we've already adopted. And like I said, the biggest problem is finding them, making sure that they have a privilege license to even have something to revoke and then enforcing it. Mayor Copenhagen said, we have to put teeth in the privilege

license. Ms. Duncan said, and determining whether it's worth expending money on a service that can do that for us. Like I said, they were surprisingly expensive to me. But we're doing that research to see if that is something we, you know, it might be worth council looking at to invest in. Ms. Baldwin said, okay, well just keep me up to date. Ms. Duncan continued, but I did want to point you to that section. And the key is for neighbors to call them in so that we, first of all, know that they're there to determine whether they have a privilege license. And second of all, we can try to deal with the issue and talk to the owners and explain what our rules are about short-term rentals. Ms. Baldwin said, thank you, appreciate it. Ms. Duncan replied, you're welcome.

Karen Slicer, 5709 Slimbridge Drive, said, full disclosure, David McClain, Councilman McClain and I live in the same neighborhood. The party that took place on May 16 that I am going to speak about, there's exactly two houses between him and the Airbnb. So I will tell you also, full disclosure, that I might be a little nervous because I'm not used to speaking before such prestigious people. So anyway. And also disclosure, I am the HOA board chair for our neighborhood, which is not truly an honor. May 16th, there was a terrible, terrible party in our neighborhood. And I was gone that night working at a veterans' dinner. And so Sunday morning, I looked at my phone, and I had had the volume down because I was at some place where I didn't. And as forgetful as I am, I forgot to turn the volume back up. Sunday morning, I had scads of messages and calls. This party that went on, the people live in Fayetteville. They used to live, of course, on the street. This is not much of a concern to them. But I will tell you, there's 98 homes in our neighborhood. This caused a lot of havoc and fear. Drugs, beer bottles being thrown up in people's houses, people blocking the street. The police had to be called. One policeman came out. He could not handle it because these people refused to move their cars from blocking the street. So more people were called. There was three or four dispatchers working on this call. This house is on Smithfield. It's worth about maybe \$475,000, and then it's been turned into an Airbnb. This is Lisa and Jason Stinnett that owned the house. They now live in Fayetteville. We've had trouble ever since the very moment that they decided to make this into an Airbnb. This was not the only time, but this was the worst time. I went down the next morning, the street, all the way around the curb Councilman McClain, was broken glass, beer bottles, stubs. I have never smoked pot. I don't know what it looks like, but I was informed a lot of those stubs were pot. You could still smell it. So the police, as I said, were called. They could not handle it. The one policeman couldn't handle it. This went on until after 5 in the morning. We had women that were alone with their children that were terrified because these cars were driving through yards and around houses. They had no business being there. So as a HOA chair, I'll tell you, I'm not as sweet as she is. I'm a little bit sour. I fully intend to pursue ways to strengthen the laws, increase fines in order to keep the Jonesboro neighborhoods safe. We have a beautiful neighborhood, but that's beside the point. All neighborhoods, regardless of the class of people or the class that we think they are in, deserve to be safe and to be able to have peaceful evenings. So when meeting with you all, I appreciated that so much. I did and still do. But an event where they advertise a party is illegal. They charge. People come from everywhere. They act like fools. So anyway, I think they need to follow the ordinances and requirements. What I've looked up is an event at a house is taxed like a hotel. And if it's taxed like a hotel, then by golly, it is a hotel. It is not a house. So anyway, talk about leaving lights on in a hotel. They were on for 24 hours. So according to Airbnb, he called the police and asked them to remove all the party. He has a camera. He got a lot of calls himself in Fayetteville. He asked the police to remove the people. And in meeting with you all, we found out that the police cannot remove people under that circumstance is what we understood. Ms. Duncan said, not the people that actually rented it. Now the rest of the people, maybe. Ms. Still continued, yes, I'm sorry. So lastly, I will just say that our board, we have an attorney

strengthening our bylaws. But what I need for the City Council to do is realize that, number one, we're not going away. Number two, that I will be willing to work with you. I do have some ideas on representatives and things. And I will be willing to work with you, as Ms. Baldwin will, too. And I have quite a few neighbors here. So we will work with you to figure out how to have anyone operating these short-term hotels. We need respect. We need peace. And we won't be at peace or placated. So we expect and want a solution. But we will help you work at that solution. So thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you for your time.

Brent Andrews (Mark Anderson), 808 Gloucester Close, Bridger Place, said, I was up that morning. It's like 4:30. And I heard the screams and stuff from the other side, like the neighborhood And I knew it was something you don't normally hear. So, I called 9-1-1. And by the time I got in the truck and went to the stop sign at the end of Bridger Close and Bridger Drive, I looked to the left. I had already seen the cop cars down there. And I saw all the people in the car before us driving. So I told dispatch, send everybody you've got, send more. There was the city police. There was the sheriff's department, tow trucks. I looked to the right towards that house. The cars was parked in the yards. It was just chaos. I mean, it was just...I know our neighborhood has been through the tornado. For one thing, the police, fire, they did not get paid to deal with that kind of crap. We invested, like my parents, a ton of time, money into that neighborhood. He was out there on foot. When we didn't have any power poles or lights after the tornado. I mean, we were trying to be as safe as possible. A lot of people work at the steel mills. And their wives and kids are at home. And you have, like she said, you're going to turn it into a party. Somebody needs to do something. Somebody needs to go. I mean, they came in our neighborhood. If they come on our property, lead poisoning is very deadly. If that kind of party comes back again, if they come over to the grass of our property, we will do what we gotta do. We are not going to put up with it. So, I think it would be safer if y'all do it. Mayor Copenhaver said, and I will add too, we've already ended our we have three minutes left in our 15 minutes. So, just a minute, Ms. Lack. I think it's also imperative that we realize these are expenditures that come on the city as well. And so, that's very costly when these events occur in our community because we have to obviously provide the resources to make that happen when they need to be somewhere else. So, yes, ma'am, you've got three minutes. Councilmember Chris Moore said, Mayor, before she speaks, I just have a quick question for Carol. Obviously, these two events were heavily reported to the police. What action there? What penalties became of that case? Ms. Duncan said, I couldn't answer what tickets might have been written that night. We're still researching and going to reach out. We wanted to get all our ducks in a row before we reach out to the owners of the property. Police Chief Rick Elliott said, there were arrests made and vehicles towed and the party disbanded. But, as they said, it took a lot of resources to handle the situation. But there was action taken, and as Ms. Duncan alluded to that, we cannot forcibly make the person that leased or rented the place leave, but we can the other occupants and essentially that is what happened. So, big problem. It took a little bit to get addressed. Obviously, they left a path of destruction across this. But, as they moved to, we did have an earlier meeting to discuss this, and as a discussion of public safety, we were looking at other ways to amend our current ordinances, maybe give a little bit more teeth into what we have in place. I know Ms. Duncan was doing research across the state, other Airbnbs, and how the police handled situations when they arise there. So, this is a problem since it's come to light. I brought up, there are some other issues we've had besides these two. So, it's kind of becoming a problem. Historically, in Jonesboro, we've seen these what we call pop-up parties take place in abandoned buildings, or buildings not maybe empty, and somebody will rent it to them for a night to throw a pop-up party. And we hammered down on that pretty hard, along with our fire marshals. So, now the end result is they've resorted to going to

Airbnbs and hosting the party until it gets shut down. That's essentially what's happened. They want to throw a party until we come along and run the fire and shut it down. But, it's at the expense of these homeowners losing their sleep and destruction of the property in the neighborhood. So, very good dialogue tonight on the topic, and we are currently looking at it, and I agree with these individuals that I'm looking to do we need to put more teeth into it. And I think there was a lot of discussion in the earlier meeting about the number of people that could be there on the lease and have more enforcement on that end. So, I think there's some things that's coming that will address this for not only their neighborhood, but across the city because I know two other areas where we have the same problem. Ms. Duncan said, and it's happening across the nation. Chief Elliott responded, it is. Ms. Duncan continued, but I will say, not to defend any bad short-term rental owners, but what I think we also find is they're renting it in different names. You may have had John Doe who threw the 300-person party, and you're like, well, I'll never rent to John Doe again. Well, John Doe's probably not the person who's on the rental agreement next time. It's Sally Smith or Sally. We have a Sally Smith. She's going to be really mad at me for saying that. I'm not blaming Sally Smith. They just rotate the name. Chief Elliott said, they work the system. Like any law we have, rules we have, people learn to work the system so we always have to stay on top of it. Councilmember Moore said, I was thinking at a much simpler level. I was thinking about disturbing the peace, illegal parking, just the basic small things you blow in there and write everybody up for that. Ms. Duncan said, yeah, all of that, our noise ordinance, all of that's still affected. Chief Elliott said, all applicable still. Councilmember Moore continued, yeah, I mean, because we passed a decibel noise ordinance. Ms. Duncan said, we still have that. Councilmember Moore went on, and I assume if it's like I didn't recognize her as Ruth, I'd call her Missy. But as Missy said, I would assume there was illegal parking in people's yards. Chief Elliott said, there was, that particular night the party grew pretty quick, and as she alluded to, that yes, I've received several phone calls from people in the West End, I think along with the Mayor's staff and the Mayor. And we put resources into it, and of course, it took a little bit to get it diffused and get it moved out. But, you know, we got it done. And the same thing in their neighborhood. Yeah, it may start out with one officer. But, you know, took additional resources, which takes away from other calls because they have to pour everything into it. And then, with the help of the sheriff's office, you know, coming to help disperse the big party. And, again, the problem is not people from Jonesboro, necessarily. It's out-of-towners coming in and taking advantage of our amenities and hosting these parties. And from there, they hit some of our convenience stores and gather on lots and cause problems until 3 or 4 in the morning. So it's like playing whack-a-mole all night on some of these weekends that will start out with a party, we'll bust it up, go together on the parking lot over here, and we'll bust it up until they finally get tired of us and go back to their respective homes, you know, outside of Jonesboro, in other counties or other cities. So it's not a new problem. It's just they're taking a different approach by going to the Airbnb's for their popup parties which includes these videos and all that. Mayor Copenhagen said, thank you, Chief.

Patti Lack, 4108 Forest Hill Road, said, and this is a request to you, Mayor Copenhagen, and to all you city council people, and also to Derrel Smith, is that today at the BZA meeting is that there was one of the variances being requested, and this was to put the TSC store in the old Fred's building. And they had the plan, and they were asking for three variances. They got two of them, and the third one came up. And it pertained to the road that is behind where Gina's is, and apparently that is a private road. And there were some solutions to it, but they left there knowing that, guess what, we're not going to have a TSC store because that TSC store is going to go probably to Brookland or it's going to go to Paragould. And the downfall that we have here for the city is that we're going to lose a lot of tax dollars and we're going to lose a really good

store. So I don't know if you, Mayor, and all you council people can review that a little bit and maybe work with the applicant and see how that can work out because it wasn't a huge issue. But I think if we lose that store, I think there's going to be sales tax dollars, but also, too, that's one more store that we're not going to have here in town. And the reason why they're moving is that the location that they have over there on Red Wolf Boulevard, they are going to move to a bigger store or location. The parking lot is going to be better too. So I hope, Mayor, you can work with the applicant there and we can keep that store here in Jonesboro. So thank you. Mayor Copenhaver said, thank you.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilperson Chris Gibson, seconded by Councilperson Brian Emison, that this meeting be Adjourned. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 11 - Brian Emison;Chris Moore;Chris Gibson;David McClain;Joe Hafner;Kevin Miller;Anthony Coleman;Janice Porter;John Street;Charles Coleman and LJ Bryant

Absent: 1 - Ann Williams

_____ **Date:** _____

Harold Copenhaver, Mayor

Attest:

_____ **Date:** _____

April Leggett, City Clerk